

Current Class: CONFIDENTIAL  
Current Handling: n/a

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ACTION ARA-00

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	AID-00	INR-10	SS-00	H-01	NSCE-00
	NSAE-00	HA-09	L-03	TRSE-00	PM-10	PA-01	OMB-01
	INRE-00	RP-10	USIE-00	SP-02	SNP-01	C-01	SSE-01
	PRS-01	DS-01	SCT-02	P-02	T-01	/057 W	
				-----102131 151720Z /47			

P 151722Z NOV 88  
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1125  
INFO CIA WASHDC  
DIA WASHDC  
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM  
AMEMBASSY CARACAS  
AMEMBASSY QUITO  
AMEMBASSY LIMA  
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BOGOTA 17064

SOUTHCOM FOR POLAD

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: PHUM, PTER, PINS, CO  
SUBJECT: MASSACRE IN SEGOVIA: MANY THEORIES, FEW FACTS;  
HIGH LEVEL COMMISSION APPOINTED

1. (C) SUMMARY: UNKNOWN ARMED MEN KILLED APPROXIMATELY 42 PEOPLE AND WOUNDED AT LEAST 30 OTHERS IN THE ANTIOQUIAN TOWN OF SEGOVIA ON NOVEMBER 11. MOST COMMENTATORS BELIEVE THE MASSACRE WAS THE ACT OF A RIGHT WING PARAMILITARY GROUP, BUT OTHERS THINK LEFTIST GUERRILLAS MAY HAVE BEEN INVOLVED. THE EVIDENCE IS MIXED. THE PEOPLE OF SEGOVIA HAVE PROMISED TO SHUT DOWN THE TOWN UNTIL THE GOC DISCOVERS THE CULPRITS. THE GOC IS SENDING A HIGH LEVEL COMMISSION TO BEGIN INVESTIGATIONS NOVEMBER 15. THIS MASSACRE IS THE WORST  
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SINCE MAY, AND THE LATEST IN AN ESCALATING WAR BETWEEN PRIVATE GROUPS OF THE LEFT AND THE RIGHT IN NORTHERN ANTIOQUIA AND SOUTHERN CORDOBA. END SUMMARY

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2. (U) UNKNOWN ARMED MEN KILLED 42 PEOPLE AND WOUNDED AT LEAST 30 OTHERS IN THE ANTIOQUIAN TOWN OF SEGOVIA THE EVENING OF NOVEMBER 11 (NOTE: LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE SURROUNDING THIS LATEST MULTIPLE KILLING, THE NUMBERS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE). ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS, RANDOMLY DIRECTED AUTOMATIC RIFLE FIRE CLAIMED SOME CHILDREN AND ELDERLY; HOWEVER, MOST OF THE VICTIMS FELL WHEN THE PERPETRATORS ATTACKED APPARENTLY PRE-SELECTED BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS, HOUSES, BARS AND A DISCOTEQUE.

3. (U) INITIAL PRESS REPORTS SAID SOME SURVIVORS CLAIMED THAT THE GROUP WAS A RIGHT WING PARAMILITARY SQUAD; OTHERS THAT THE MURDERERS WERE MEMBERS OF A GUERRILLA FORCE. SEGOVIA IS ONE OF FOUR TOWNS IN ANTIOQUIA WHICH ELECTED A PATRIOTIC UNION (UP) MAYOR, RITA IVONE TOBON, IN THE MARCH ELECTIONS, WHICH LEADS MANY TO BELIEVE THAT RIGHTIST ELEMENTS WERE SENDING VOTERS THERE A MESSAGE. HOWEVER, MOST OF THE DEAD APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN MEMBERS OF THE LIBERAL PARTY AND FOLLOWERS OF FORMER SENATOR PABLO GUARIN WHO WAS KILLED BY A GUERRILLA DEATH SQUAD IN NOVEMBER 1987, WHICH WOULD LEND CREDENCE TO THE GUERRILLA THEORY. (GUARIN HAD BEEN WIDELY ACCUSED OF ORGANIZING ANTI-LEFTIST DEATH SQUADS IN THE NEARBY MAGDALENA RIVER VALLEY.) MOST LATER REPORTS HOWEVER, TENDED TO THE THEORY THAT A GROUP KNOWN AS "DEATH TO REVOLUTIONARIES IN THE NORTHEAST" (MRN) WAS RESPONSIBLE. THIS QGROUP RECENTLY RESCUED TWO CIVIL DEFENSE OFFICIALS WHO WERE BEING HELD BY ELN GUERRILLAS IN THE AREA IN WHAT MANY CALL THE FIRST ARMED  
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CONFRONTATION BETWEEN A GUERRILLA FORCE AND A PRIVATE RIGHT WING ARMED GROUP. MRN HAD PREVIOUSLY CLAIMED CREDIT FOR THE MURDER OF THE UP MAYOR IN THE NEARBY TOWN OF REMEDIOS IN MAY.

4. (U) A GENERAL STRIKE WAS CALLED IN SEGOVIA BEGINNING SATURDAY NOVEMBER 12. THE LEADERS OF THE STRIKE SAY THE TOWN WILL REMAIN SHUT DOWN UNTIL THE CULPRITS ARE IDENTIFIED. ON NOVEMBER 14, THE GOC ANNOUNCED THE FORMATION OF AN INVESTIGATIVE COMMISSION TO BE COMPRISED OF TOP OFFICIALS FROM ALL THE INVESTIGATIVE BODIES OF COLOMBIA, INCLUDING DAS, THE NATIONAL POLICE, THE JUDICIAL POLICE, AND THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE. THE COMMISSION WAS DB"PECTED TO ARRIVE IN SEGOVIA ON NOVEMBER 15.

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5. (C) COMMENT: THIS IS THE WORST MASSACRE SINCE THE MEJOR ESQUINAS KILLINGS IN CORDOBA LAST APRIL AND, THUS FAR, THE MOST INCOMPREHENSIBLE. THE MODUS OPERANDI IS THAT OF RIGHT WING GROUPS OF ASSASINS. YET NOT A SINGLE MEMBER OF THE UP WAS KILLED. ON THE OTHER HAND, NEVER BEFORE HAS A GUERRILLA FORCE BEEN ACCUSED OF RANDOM MASS KILLINGS OF CIVILIANS. THE ONLY CERTAINTY IS THAT SEGOVIA LIES IN AN AREA CONVULSED BY GUERRILLA VIOLENCE, AND PRIVATE REACTIONS. THE AREA INCLUDES NORTHERN ANTIOQUIA AND SOUTHERN CORDOBA AND STRETCHES FROM THE CITY OF APARTADO IN URABA TO BARRANCABERMEJA ON THE MAGDALENA RIVER. HERE RICH AGRICULTURAL AND MINING LAND ADJOINS REMOTE MOUNTAINS WHICH MAKE GOOD HAVENS FOR THE GUERRILLAS. NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS HAVE ALSO BEEN BUYING UP LAND IN THE AREA AND ARE ACCUSED OF SUPPORTING THE PARAMILITARY GROUPS. EMBASSY HOPES TO OBTAIN BETTER INFORMATION ONCE THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN ABLE TO

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